

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-4, 10-19, 21, 39, 45-46, and 48-51, as amended, are pending in this application. In this Response, Applicants have amended certain claims. In light of the Office Action, Applicants believe these amendments serve a useful clarification purpose, and are desirable for clarification purposes, independent of patentability. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the claim amendments do not limit the range of any permissible equivalents.

In particular, independent claims 1, 10, 14, and 16 were rewritten to incorporate features of the invention indicated to be allowable by the Examiner. In addition, various other dependent claims were amended or canceled to maintain consistency with the language now recited in these independent claims. Finally, claims 8-9 and 22-23 have been canceled.

As no new matter has been added, Applicants respectfully request entry of these amendments at this time.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's allowance of claims 4, 39, and 45-51. Office Action at Page 4. In addition, Applicants appreciate the Examiner's recognition of allowable subject matter in claims 19-20 if rewritten in independent form. *Id.*

In response, claim 1 has been rewritten to include the features previously recited in claim 20. Accordingly, claims 2 and 20 have been canceled. Furthermore, independent claims 10 and 14 have been rewritten to include the features recited in allowed claim 4. Finally, claim 16 has been rewritten to include the features previously recited in now-canceled claim 47, which was indicated to be allowable by the Examiner.

THE REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Rejection of Claims 39 and 45-46 Appears to Be a Mistake

Claims 39, 45, and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,816,937 to Shimozaka in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,631,319 to Blahak *et al.* for the reasons set forth on pages 2-3 of the Office Action. Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection appears to have been overcome by amendment / argument in the previous response filed August 6, 2007. *See, e.g.,* August 6, 2007 Response to Final Office Action at Pages 7-9;

see also Office Action at Page 4. As such, reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejection based on the combination of Shimosaka and Blahak is respectfully requested.

The Rejections Based on the Combination of Kennedy and Frisch Are Overcome

The Examiner also rejected claims 1-3, 8-18, and 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,290,614 to Kennedy, III *et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,742,128 to Frisch *et al.* for the reasons provided on pages 3-4 of the Office Action. Applicants respectfully maintain their position that this combination does not render the present invention obvious for the reasons set forth in the August 6, 2007 Response to Final Office Action.

In an effort to accelerate the issuance of a patent after seven years of prosecution, however, Applicants have elected to rewrite independent claims 1, 10, 14, and 16 to include subject matter indicated to be allowable by the Examiner. Applicants reserve the right to file continuing applications to pursue the subject matter previously recited in the now rewritten claims and/or canceled claims.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the § 103 rejection based on the combination of Kennedy and Frisch is overcome. As such, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

CONCLUSION

All claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that the present remarks still do not resolve all of the issues regarding patentability of the pending claims, Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the undersigned attorneys to discuss any remaining issues.

A Petition for Extension of Time is submitted herewith extending the time for response one month to and including April 12, 2008. No other fees are believed to be due at this time. Should any fee be required, however, please charge such fee to Hanify & King, P.C. Deposit Account No. 50-4545, Order No. 20002.7058452001.

Respectfully submitted,
HANIFY & KING, P.C.

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